

Ohio Conference

The churches of Ohio will please remember, (1) the conference meets at Ankenytown, June 7-10; (2) that *every* church in the State should be represented at the conference, either by letter or delegate, the latter is preferred, (3) that it is very important that your report is sent to the secretary, J. A. Miller, Ashland, Ohio. Let there be a full attendance, especially a full representation.

Educational Number

The issue of the EVANGELIST the first week in June will be an educational number. Pastors are requested to preach sermons on the educational interests of the church June 3, and present the claims of Ashland College. Let announcements be made *now*. More next week.

Our Missions

We trust Brother Cassel will be able to report a willing, ready, generous, and immediate response to his appeal in behalf of our missions. Let not the good work be hindered for want of sufficient means, when the churches can so easily support them.

Is It Time?

Who is chairman of the Executive Committee of the National Conference? It is time that arrangements are being made for the conference of 1900. Let this preparatory work not be delayed too long.

Blessed Spring

In how many ways and with what persistent repetition God reminds us that the law of life in his universe triumphs over the interval of death, and must so triumph over all the coming ages. His smile revives the face of nature, and forms of vernal beauty, a new life, a new hope, and a joy like unto the dawn in Eden with melody of birds, the dew of perennial youth, the upspringing of rapturous aspiration, all speak to us the message of infinite love so certain and so soon to happily terminate the winter of our earthly sorrows, and bring in the springtime of a blessed immortality.

It Comes From Heaven

How cold and lifeless is the old earth so long as the face of the sun is hid behind wintry clouds, and so long as he journeys in the distant world. But when he returns, when he smiles upon barren fields, when he bends in warm effulgence of blessing, when he persuades the softening showers to descend, how quickly we behold the vernal resurrection. It is so with our souls. Heaven bends to us, and love thaws the icy hardness of our hearts, and showers of divine grace water the seeds of truth and nourish the timid upspringing of hope. The promise of

fruitfulness soon appears. The bloom of beauty is the natural habiliment of life, but fruitage is the divine ultimate which justifies it all and renders the spring still more lovely because of its promise of the coming harvest.

The Gentleness of Jesus

The gentleness of the Lord Jesus has been and now is and always will be the wonder and admiration of the world. Many years before God was manifest in the flesh, the Psalmist said, "Thy gentleness hath made me great," and the prophet, speaking of the tender mercies and gentleness of the coming one said, "A bruised reed will he not break and the smoking flax will he not quench." We do well to think much of the gentleness of Jesus for in it we shall find great comfort. It is said that a mother's love is the tenderest thing on earth but Christ's love is tenderer still. How gently did the blessed Lord touch the wounded soul and the bruised heart. Wherever he found a spark of love, of goodness, in the human heart, that he would fan into a bright blaze by the sweet and gentle breath of the Holy Spirit. Let us learn this lesson of gentleness from Him who said, "Learn of me for I am meek and lowly of heart." Tenderness of spirit, purity of heart, gladness in his touch, these are beautiful characteristics of Him whose we are and whom we serve.

Doing Good and Being Good

There is a great deal of energy wasted in trying to *do* good without *being* good. Back of all our doing there must be character as the one thing which gives value and influence to our words and acts. Acting is a very poor substitute for reality. Behind every word we speak and every deed we perform there must be the *life* which gives force to the word and to the deed of which they are but the result. The law of the gospel is not *do* and *live* as it was said of old, but *live* and *do*. There must be life first, then action. To do the work of a Christian without being a Christian, if such a thing be possible, is at best a very tedious task, a mere drudgery. Christian service with no life back of it to prompt such service must be wearisome indeed. Here is the secret of a loving, joyous service. It is the spirit-filled life behind it that projects itself into such service as naturally as a plant in the dark cellar inclines to the light. To one who is born again, and has received the gift of the Holy Spirit, service is no longer a burden, it is a joy, a delight, a real pleasure. Doing service for the Master, to one who has the life of the Master, is as natural as eating is to a hungry man. There is power in goodness, in reality, in life. Without these all our saying and doing, our words and deeds, are but as rain drops upon a marble slab, they make very little, if any impression. The secret of do-

ing good is *being* good; the secret of living right, living as a Christian ought to live, is in having life, the life of him whom we serve.

A Rusty Hinge

The great Quadrennial Conference of the M. E. Church is in session at Chicago. It is an interesting and important gathering of denominational workers, and they are blowing the trumpets of Methodism with a lusty sound. They believe in themselves, their church, their system, with a refreshing thoroughness. However, we do not start out to discuss them one way or another, but to note a little change in their discipline which attracted our attention. Heretofore that discipline required Methodists to kneel in public prayer. Of course everyone knows that it has long since been an obsolete rule. Methodist congregations no longer kneel in church, and for that matter they have plenty of company, for there are few that do kneel. The pious rule of the saintly fathers has passed out of fashion. The discipline is changed to suit, and it is now technically lawful to simply bow the head in prayer.

Between trying to lead and trying to follow the procession of events, creeds and disciplines have a hustling time these late years. The fact illustrates a notable tendency of the times, and that tendency is to minimize forms, ordinances, ceremonies, all the external things of the church, and to exalt the Christian life, holiness, benevolence, charity, good works, sincerity, purity. May we not ask why the two ideas are thus set over against each other? Is there a subtle disagreement between the shell and the kernel? Undoubtedly the milk is the best thing in the cocoanut, but must we therefore kick the cocoanut to one side? It is true that we cast away the shell when we have secured the kernel, but not before, and we believe that it is a dangerous conceit that assumes so great a degree of spiritual perfection, that ordinances become hindrances instead of helps. People who think that they have reached that point ought to be very good people indeed. A Christian can pray, to be sure, without getting on his knees, and indeed a slavish dependence upon this or any other external form of religion is spiritual bondage, but there is a time and place for every thing the Lord has appointed in connection with the service of His church. All His appointments have their proper uses, and the enlightened disciple will recognize this fact and order his conduct accordingly.

Brief Notes

A rich man recently lost a pet ape and as far as possible provided a real funeral for the dear thing. A costly coffin was purchased and after a suitable burial a monument was erected. A daily paper aptly suggests that perhaps the man regarded the ape as a near relative.